



## **Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture**

Date: March 3, 2022

Time: 7:00-8:30 PM

Location: Zoom

**Attending:** Stewart Ikeda, Steve Poltorzycki, Lidia Kenig-Scher, Cristin Canterbury Bagnall, Christine Noah, Nick Castellano, Tom Formicola, Stephanie Marlin-Curiel

**Absent:** Tom Davison, Andrea Nicolay, Sarah Morgan-Wu, Beth Locke

**Guests:** Terry Holt, Allison Holt, Jenny Raitt, Cecily Miller

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm.

### **1) ROLL CALL AND RULES OF REMOTE MEETINGS CONDUCTED DURING COVID-19**

### **2) APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY MINUTES**

- The minutes were approved unanimously by all who attended the last meeting.

### **3) UPDATES ON PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

- The commission welcomed Jenny Raitt, who is filling in for Ali Carter until she returns from maternity leave.
- Arlington no longer has a mask mandate. Events can be planned.
- The ARPA small business program was able to provide funding to  $\frac{2}{3}$  of applicants. There will be a special carve out for arts and culture in the next round.
- Jenny will accompany Steve, Stewart, and Cristin to the Finance Committee meeting on March 16 to discuss the budget for FY23. They will get an agenda a few days before.
- Looking through the warrant for this year's Town Meeting, nothing sticks out in terms of arts and culture. One resolution at the end of the warrant is to increase diversity in town appointments. If passed, appointing authorities must prioritize diversifying town boards and committees with applicants from underrepresented groups (racial, economic, etc.). To ensure compliance, there would likely be procedures or recommendations created for future searches. The petitioners (Elizabeth Dray and ten registered voters) will probably outline their vision for this when they present the article. ACAC has already been focused on diversifying the commission on subcommittees, so this article would just be a check on that.
- Rachel Oliveri and Cecily approached Del's Lemonade about painting on the store panels for Eco Week. The landlord said no. Jenny will see if she knows anyone connected to the owner.

#### **4) REMOTE VS. IN-PERSON MEETINGS**

- ACAC can technically meet in person now, but remote meeting accommodation has been extended through June. Unless the state revises its open meeting law, remote meetings will not be allowed after that. There is not yet great hybrid capability at Town Hall. The consensus from the group was to continue remote meetings through June. Sarah Morgan-Wu has offered to host ACAC when we return to in-person. ACA is also a location option.

#### **5) COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE**

- Options for the parklets this year remain pretty open ended in terms of what ACAC wants to do and when. Last year they only stayed up a couple of months, but this year they will go up in April. There can't be a mural at the Medford St parklet this year because the building will be under construction, but there could be other activities or installations. Jenny noted they have only approved 3 applications so far for restaurants/businesses. Blue Ribbon doesn't want a parklet back. Clay Dreams might have a parklet. They are not doing Broadway Plaza this year, but it will potentially move back to Alton St. ACAC can program the Medford St parklet with live performances like last year. There is some noise from buses but as long as there is sensitivity to programming times, it should be fine. Artists and audiences liked that space a lot.
- The Black History Month banners were up on Mass Ave in February.
- At the Community Engagement meeting on Monday, there were 10 new people in attendance from the volunteer event. It is an interesting transition moment as the committee finds ways to balance work with engaging new people
- Chanel Thervil is still taking a personal break, so there are no updated activities for her project yet.
- The Spring Festival in the Heights is May 21. It would be great to have the commission mobilized around that event like it was around the Haiku event.
- Stewart asked for feedback on the Cultural District audio tour. The navigation is very straightforward, the narration is strong, and the sound quality is good. The information is engaging. It stands alone even without visiting all the spaces. One note was that the episodes on the podcast didn't appear in numerical order. They were easy to download. Some heard commercials but some did not. If there is a need for a wider pool of reviewers, it can be shared with the folks who came to the volunteer meeting. The Town website has a "new arrivals" section, and it was suggested this tour should be a part of that. Jenny could help promote. There's also a new business page done in collaboration with the Chamber.

#### **6) ARTS ARLINGTON WEBSITE DISCUSSION**

- Terry and Stewart have made updates to the website, but they have approached some limitations on continued customization. This website was designed and developed a few years ago and technology has changed. It is a complicated site to update, and the goal is to make it easier for folks to be able to jump in.
- Terry suggested ACAC move away from GoDaddy. There are also some bigger picture questions to answer and figure out what ACAC wants from the website. Terry is an expert on the site but she is currently the only one who really can deal with it, which is not sustainable.
- Terry also suggested getting a nice new clean theme. There are some free ones and cheap ones that can be customized, and once they are applied, the content integrates into the website like a template. Colors, images, logos, etc. would also be customizable. It would just be different on the backend. Part of the problem with the current theme is that it is over-engineered so there are a lot of add-ins. The question is what people will need to be able to do (post photo galleries, videos, etc.). Things like style guides, directions, etc. can be developed to help keep things consistent.
- Every committee and every task force needs to look through the needs assessment and think long-term. The importance of an archiving function was emphasized.

- The first step is to find a new place to host the site and Terry wants the approval of the commission to move forward on that. Everyone was in favor.
- The Marketing Committee can make the decision on this and there is a budget for it. There will need to be a proposal for specific changes with a budget, and that can be discussed.

#### **7) NEW BUSINESS**

- The Chamber is organizing a summer concert series - more information to come.
- ACAC is looking for a new commissioner, so please keep an ear out for potential candidates. Jenny will get it up on the town website.
- Review your contact info and committee participation on [the ACAC roster](#).
- Thanks to Jenny who engaged in a long and thoughtful meeting with the Climate Futures team to review proposed locations.

The meeting ended at 8:36PM.

Respectfully submitted by Christine Noah.

Next meeting: April 7, 7pm